



CITY'S VISION TO RECAPTURE RIVERFRONTS TAKES SHAPE

(PITTSBURGH) October 27, 2008 - Mayor Luke Ravenstahl announced today that past and future visions for the City's waterfronts are one step closer to being combined into a comprehensive planning document that will reconnect the rivers to neighborhoods and drive more development.

"For decades, our riverfronts were used as transportation centers for the industries of the past, but now we will use them to further the momentum surrounding Pittsburgh's third renaissance," Mayor Ravenstahl said. "It's time we return our riverfronts back to our neighborhoods, reclaiming our waterways as amenities and part of what makes Pittsburgh 'America's most livable City.'"

The City's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) and Department of City Planning have joined forces with Riverlife to develop a vision for a key segment of the Allegheny Riverfront, focusing on the existing market momentum in the Strip District and extending to the Highland Park neighborhood.

The URA released a request for proposal (RFP) Friday for teams with expertise in urban design, market research, and traffic/transit analysis to create a market-based, urban design vision and implementation plan for the 6.45 mile segment. The RFP requires that submissions utilize the 2001 Vision for Pittsburgh's Riverfronts and focus primarily on the underutilized riverfronts between 16th and 21st Streets in the Strip District. These waterways, currently occupied by surface parking and heavy industry, are contiguous to millions of dollars of private development and offer a promising view of the downtown skyline.

"Many of the current structures occupying the riverfront were constructed at a time when rivers were seen as transportation corridors for industrial production, rather than the natural treasures and economic engines they have the potential to be," said Rob Stephany, URA executive director. "We have the opportunity to reconnect neighborhoods, main streets and development to our rivers. A strategic plan will help us to drive more momentum into these neighborhoods and better prioritize and rationalize public and private investments."

The final plan will be incorporated into, and serve as a model for, the City's comprehensive riverfront master plan to be completed in 2010. A steering team will be formed to work with the selected consultant team throughout the process and public meetings will be organized to engage

affected communities. The RFP submissions are due November 14, 2008 and the chosen vendor is expected to begin work in early February 2009.

“When it comes to distinctive urban waterfronts, the Allegheny Riverfront presents as exciting an opportunity as any location in the country,” said Lisa Schroeder, Riverlife executive director. “We applaud the City of Pittsburgh for involving the community in a planning process that will better connect the river into the heart of the City for recreation, commerce, urban living and environmental preservation. We look forward to supporting the process and can hardly wait to get started.”

The RFP can be viewed at www.ura.org.

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